Subject: English
Grade: 10
Module 1: Classroom Environment

Indicator: 2. Promoting engagement in and shared responsibility for the learning process including encouraging opportunities for students to initiate their own questions and inquiry.

Goal: I want to learn how to use Total Participation Techniques to increase student participation and active engagement in the classroom. As a result, students will spend more time being on-task and engaged in the lesson. Also, the number of times I have to redirect off-task behavior will decrease, as a result of students monitoring their own behavior and learning.

Initial Summary:
Currently, I try to encourage student engagement by using creative elements in the lesson, offering choices, and varying activities. Engagement varies from day to day and engagement decreases during lessons with more direct instruction. I have seen some students display off-task behavior, lose focus, act disruptively, or become disengaged and unmotivated. I would like to give students more ownership over their own thinking and learning, use strategies to make sure that all students are engaged throughout the entire lesson, and see behavior improve as a result.

Reflection:
For this module, the resources that I used to develop new learning included studying literature on participation, engagement, and classroom management. I also talked with my mentor and colleagues, and was able to observe some colleagues in order to add to my improve my practice regarding student engagement and self-monitoring of behavior. I specifically focused on two of my Sophomore English classes, my Period 1 and my Period 4. Students in my Period 1 class were generally disengaged and did not choose to participate in class activities, ranging from discussions to group work to independent work. Students in my Period 4 class were very energetic, often off-task, disruptive, and needed frequent redirection for inappropriate behavior. For both classes, I wanted the students to be more engaged, participate more, and monitor their own learning and behavior.

At the start of the school year, I talked to fellow teachers about how to improve my classroom management in order to increase on-task time, engagement, and spend less time redirecting students for misbehavior. Colleagues suggested that I extend my do nows each day into longer writing assignments, so that students get settled and have to really spend more time on the bell ringer. Now, all of my bell ringers are writing prompts that take about 4-5 minutes. As a result of this change, I have seens students become used to the routine of grabbing a do now on the way in and sitting down to complete it. This has helped them to calm down quicker and sets the tone for the rest of class. This has also increased instructional time and allows us to move through the do now and onto other activities. I also observed other teachers and saw several teachers using timers. I began to use a timer at the start of class in order to get students settled quickly and make them aware of the time that they have for the do now. The timer allows me to keep track of my instruction better and as a result, students accomplish more at the start of class.

In order to learn about engagement and participation strategies, I read *Total Participation Techniques* by Persia and William Himmele. From this text and based on conversations with my mentor, I chose to incorporate TPT hold-ups and TPTs involving movement. Himmele and Himmele discuss the high risk of disengagement and

offer Total Participation Techniques (TPTs) as a way for students to demonstrate both "active participation and cognitive engagement in the topic being studied" (Himmele & Himmele 7). I wanted to learn about how I could get more students to be actively engaged throughout the lesson, instead of relying on those students who always volunteered to share their ideas. I wanted all students to be present in the lesson at hand. Some TPTs that I was already familiar with were Think-Pair-Share, Quick-Writes, Thumbs Up/Down vote. I got some ideas about other strategies that I could use to involve everyone on the spot, strategies that I could plan ahead of time into my lessons, check for understanding, and get students up and moving.

As a result of my initial learning, I began to incorporate Total Participation techniques in my lessons. For example, I began to use hold-ups in my lessons. When using hold ups, no student could opt-out; every student had to either hold up an idea, hold up an answer, or vote. For instance, when learning about static and dynamic characters, students had to hold up the words "static" or "dynamic" for specific characters in the novel we were reading. I also began to use Yes/No/Maybe hold ups at different points throughout a lesson, sometimes after the do now, before starting a discussion, or to check for understanding. As a result of using Total Participation techniques regularly, I saw that I began to hear from a greater variety of students on a daily basis. Early on in the year, it was common to only hear from the same handful of students who regularly chose to answer and ask questions. For Period 1, I regularly heard from about 4 out of 17 students voluntarily. After incorporating Total Participation Techniques, I heard from all students in Period 1 in a variety of ways, because students were expected to hold something up or take a vote. Every student was expected to participate and could not opt out, and that really changed the classroom environment. In my Period 1 class, where students had been disengaged and unwilling to participate, the TPTs required them to be active in their thinking, even if they didn't want to speak verbally. Once students had taken the first step in participation with the hold-ups, I saw that they were more likely to open up and participate at other times during the lesson. For example, I now hear from T'aejah almost daily, a student who had been very quiet and unwilling to participate at the start of the year. She, along with others, are more comfortable and confident in participating in class. In my Period 4 class, I regularly heard from about half of the students at the start of the year, usually the same students who would regularly want to share their thoughts and ask questions. When I use TPTs, I see all students participating in some way. In my Period 4 class, students were expected to be physically doing something, holding something up, and they knew that I might ask them to explain their thinking. This left less time for them to engage in off-task or disruptive behavior. I began to see my most disruptive students making sense of what we were learning about and engaging along with everyone else. For example, Patrick and Samantha in my Period 4 class, who used to write a lot, but would not share or ask questions, are now more willing and comfortable to raise their hand in class and ask questions, especially if we've used a TPT hold-up first.

I continued to think about how else I could use Total Participation Techniques to engage my Period 1 and 4 students further. Himmele and Himmele discuss the way that the "need or movement may be even more important for boys than it is for girls" (Himmele & Himmele 59). My Period 4 class is about 50% boys, but it was usually the boys who would get off task, need to move around, and get up when it wasn't an appropriate time. For my Period 1 class, I thought that it would be beneficial to get them up and moving as well, as a way to keep their engagement high. I specifically pulled from Chapter 6 in *Total Participation Techniques,* along with resources from my mentor, to come up with movement TPTs. For instance, I used discussion avatars, gallery walks, 4 corner debates, and networking sessions in order to get students to participate through movement. I would use individual avatars to get students to discuss a topic by placing their avatar along a scale between agree and disagree. I used gallery walks to have students review and evaluate group work and apply new learning. I used networking sessions to get students to begin discussing with new people after they completed a

do now. I scaffolded using this technique for Period 4 by having only some students get up at a time, in order to minimize distractions and off-task behavior. Over time, I have seen students become more used to using these movement TPTs as a regular routine in the classroom. As a result of using movement TPTs, students in my Period 1 class were more awake and energized earlier on in the lesson, and students in my Period 4 class were less likely to get up later on in the lesson. I reflected on my notes for Period 1 and 4, and saw that when I used TPTs, I had less behavior issues in the classroom and I saw that students got more from the lesson, based on their exit slips, writing, and other assessments used in the lesson. I also noted that on the days when I incorporated these movement TPTs, I didn't have to make phone calls home about misbehavior, or assign detentions. Instead, I found myself rewarding students for being on task and participating.

From *Total Participation Techniques,* I also learned about strategies to have students monitor their thinking throughout an activity or lesson. I learned about processing cards as a way for me to know where students are in their thinking, and for students to be aware as well. I used processing cards that said "Still Thinking" and "Ready to Share" predominantly during Socratic Seminar discussions. Before using processing cards during Socratic Seminars, students were expected to participate in the discussion, actively listen, and refer to the text to add to the discussion. I jumped in when necessary and took notes of who participated and what students did throughout the discussion. My Period 4 students improved greatly in their ability to have a discussion with practice, but not all students participated and there were many interruptions throughout the discussion. My Period 1 students struggled with being willing to speak up and share their ideas. Their discussions were not lively. I began to incorporate processing cards into their Socratic Seminars. Students would indicate whether they were "Still Thinking" or "Ready to Share." The processing cards helped to improve students' discussion abilities. I witnessed more students calling on one another after noticing that someone was "Ready to Share," fewer interruptions, more participation from more students, and a calmer discussion in my Period 4 class, which result in higher discussion grades for most of my students.

I also used processing cards during in-class writing assignments. Students let me know where they were in their thinking by placing "I Need Help" or "I'm Good" signs on their desk. Then we were able to reflect upon what students needed the most help with during the writing process. As a result of incorporating this TPT, I noticed that students got less visibly frustrated with writing assignments, and instead knew when they needed help and felt confident that I would help them however they needed in that moment. Because every student was using these writing processing cards, students worked and were engaged with the writing until they needed help, and for some students, it was more often than others. This has impacted my instruction as I now try to individualize areas for revision based on their strengths. As a result, I am now seeing more students who are willing to write first drafts and work with me to revise and improve their skills.

In order to meet my goal of having students monitor their behavior and decrease the amount of time I spend on redirection, a colleague suggested that I use a daily behavior and effort checklist at the start of the year. I created a checklist that students must go through at the end of each class, including elements such as getting started on the do now, using appropriate language, following classroom expectations. Students had to rate their behavior and effort on a scale. Then, I rated their behavior and effort at the end of each class and averaged the scores for an additional grade. This motivated students to think about how they behaved each day and gave the students who regularly behaved well a reward for their hard work. For a while, this worked well to decrease some behavior issues in the classroom and improve effort. However, after a few months, the effect seemed to be wearing off. Students were no longer thinking critically about their behavior and the checklist was just something for them to fill out at the end of the day.

After meeting with my mentor, I decided to develop a way for students to have more control in monitoring their behavior. I also looked at Marzano's *Classroom Management that Works*, specifically Chapter 6: The Student's Responsibility for Management. Marzano states that self-discipline is essential for students and provides some strategies for self-monitoring. One strategy that I decided to adopt involves students establishing a targeted goal for a behavior to stop. Students keep track of behavior and a reward is in place for achieving their goal regularly. Over time, less strict records are kept and rewards are taken away. Students in my Period 1, 4, and even my Periods 7 and 8, chose their own goals, based on what they felt that they were struggling with, met with me, and now keep track of their own daily progress in order to earn classwork points as a reward. This was optional, but many students took advantage of this opportunity to gain extra points. For example, a couple of students in my Period 1 class would take out their phones in class, and I would have to remind them to put it away. They chose the goal of putting their phone in my cell phone basket at the start of class and leaving it there until the end of class. Now, I spend less time checking for phones and having to pause to address that issue. In my Period 4, where I was spending more time addressing off-task and disruptive behavior, I now spend more time reminding students about the goals and praising when students meet their goal. I realized that by empowering students to set their own behavior goals, I was essentially inviting them to participate in inquiry-based learning, only focused around behavior, and I have been able to see the difference in their behavior. I am hopeful that as we continue into Quarter 3, students will choose different behavior goals and continue to take control over their behaviors. This is an instructional strategy that I have introduced into my other classes, and I have had similar success.

In order to learn more about behavior management, engagement, and participation, I consulted *Teach Like a Champion* by Lemov. I focused in on Chapter 3's "Exit Ticket" technique and Chapter 5's "Tight Transitions" technique. At the start of the year, I didn't always include an exit ticket at the end of every lesson. I learned that this was just another way of making sure that students were engaged throughout the entire lesson and responsible for thinking about their learning. Using exit slips at the end of every single class has helped me to better analyze the success of a lesson, plan accordingly, and see whether or not students were engaged that day. As a result, students are better able to recall what we did the previous day, and are able to participate in another way during class. Lemov also discusses making transitions quick and smooth because "messy transitions are an invitation [for] disruptions and conflicts" (Lemov 154). With my mentor, I reflected upon my transitions and realized that I needed to make them much quicker in both of my classes, to make sure that students stayed engaged and that they didn't behave inappropriately. I began to think more about my transitions while lesson planning and during my lesson. I would ask myself what the most efficient way was to move into the next activity would be, and tried to always keep the lesson moving. I also asked students to help me collect papers, hand out papers, and write on the board. This worked particularly well in my energetic Period 4 class. It helped to keep my most off-task students on task with a job, and everyone else was interested because there wasn't time to slow down and be disruptive.

Overall, I have found that after using the strategies and ideas from the literature, my mentor, and colleagues, my students are more productive in class and engagement has increased. I am able to get more students to participate in different ways throughout the lesson using Total Participation Techniques. Students have a variety of ways to demonstrate their thinking and learning, from hold ups that can help us begin discussion, to movement exercises, to written TPTs, to monitoring their own behavior. With increased participation, I witnessed that students have less time to engage in off-task and disruptive behavior. By using a couple of different ways to have students monitor and reflect upon their behavior, I spend less time in class addressing

misbehavior than I did at the start of the school year. I have been able to use TPT techniques successfully in my other classes, including an honors Sophomore English and a Junior English class. I plan to continue to use and adjust the strategies that I've learned in my Period 1 and 4 classes, along with all of my other classes.